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WHAT DID THE 'ECLIPSE STORY' REMIND US ABOUT DOING BUSINESS? by Case Lane

Ten Eclipse-Inspired Reminders to Use in Your Business

Just when you may have thought the eclipse was an excuse to have a few hours off, take a second look at how the event in its totality brought home some important reminders for anyone running a business.

1. Humans are curious

On August 21, 2017 millions of people stopped what they were doing to look at the sky. Way back in the day, humans had to experience the eclipse without receiving a weeks long primer from the 24-hour news cycle. This year everyone knew what to do. They purchased the correct solar viewing glasses, found a spot to relax and let their minds be overtaken by the cosmic spectacle.

When building and running your business, remember this curiosity factor. If you do something original, or even the same, create a unique edge to it that will drive interested people to your website or storefront. Looky-loos slowing down on the freeway to gawk at an accident may be annoying when you are trying to get home. But this aspect of human nature can propel you to the top of your industry if you use the behavior correctly.

Action: make the uniqueness of your product or service for your ideal customer

2. Shared experiences are emboldening

In an era when the collective is fading fast, and niches are rising up to create riches for those who know how to serve them, a shared experience is a rare and valued moment. While the Super Bowl or World Cup can still drive millions of people to watch the same screen at the same time, few other events have that kind of drawing power. The eclipse pulled people out of their homes to go to parks, science museums, conservatories, and even news station parking lots to watch a rare event together.

Creating a community around your business is one of the fastest ways to increase interest and build your brand. People who enjoy your product or service may band together to discuss or share their experience with it. They may want to be connected to other users in an ongoing way. You can establish and facilitate these groups and effectively maintain your brands' followers through social media. A few excited, rabid fans will be more valuable for a longer period of time than thousands of indifferent followers on a social media platform.

Action: create a niche community in social media or at your website that serves your customers' interest in your product or service

3. Image sharing is domination

People are becoming increasingly more focused on visual imagery. Photo and video sharing services are rising fast on social media. Everyone with mobile phones in their hands is also carrying a camera. The ability to show an experience to millions at a time provides people with their daily approbation, a sense of belonging and even superiority. While some may lament the 'drive for likes' that dominates the average social media user's day, others can recognize how the activity is part of our human sense of survival of the fittest.

If your product or service can be incorporated into a person's day, it will likely find its way into social media photos and videos. People will feel compelled to join the sharing if they see you or someone they know doing it first.

Action: if you use social media, incorporate the images of your product or service, preferably in use, into your photo and video feeds.

4. Cheap products can be reused

One of the hottest products to purchase in the last few weeks was solar eclipse glasses. In a time where everything is digital and quality means expensive, these pieces of cardboard selling for less than \$2 each were specifically designed to prevent retinal damage from the sun's rays. For such a cheap product, the glasses sounded awfully official, with designations such as ISO and CE certified (whatever that means), and assorted numbers associated to the solar filters. The product sold out everywhere. How could the product be so inexpensive? My guess is overseas sourcing, that is the materials and labor to make them came from inexpensive labor markets.

Solar eclipse glasses were a reminder that physical products have a place and can be made to deliver on their promise. If you are creating a product for your business, imagine how you can source the right combination of materials and scientific and manufacturing guarantees to make it valuable to your average consumer.

Action: when creating a product, look at sourcing for the long-term using the certified inexpensive materials that provide a valuable benefit

5. Destination travel is a party

To be in the direct path of 'totality' for the eclipse, millions traveled to a band of cities across the United States. They packed cars and RVs with beer, wine and snacks and set off with family and friends to pick a spot where they could sit for three hours and watch cosmic forces in action. This was a vacation with a purpose and everyone who made the trip needed an array of goods to support their viewing party.

If you have a business that supports travel, especially specific purpose destination travel, you have an opportunity to capitalize on the moment by tying your product or service to the travel reason. Think about how your product or service is essential to the travel reason, and how you can best serve customers who are looking for exactly the value you deliver to make their trip perfect.

Action: determine whether your product or service has a travel angle that can showcase your value to vacationers.

6. People want explanations

Preparing to watch the eclipse generated thousands of questions from millions of people. Many still do not believe they received a solid response, especially in the partial eclipse areas where the sky did not go dark. Eclipse Day put organizations such as NASA and the American Astronomical society, as well as all of the new media at the forefront of providing information. Some delivered, many did not.

If you have a product or service built around delivering information to customers, you are in a field already providing value. People are constantly searching for more information about pretty much every thing they can think of. Search drives a huge portion of activity on the Internet, and the aggregation of information is a major factor in business success.

Action: think about the information your business can provide in your industry or field of interest. You may have a built in market of people who are looking for exactly the value you deliver.

7. Scheduled events can work

In the on-demand, replay world, people are used to picking up on an event whenever they are ready to experience it. But when an event is scheduled for only a specific time, and there is no replay, people will flock to it for the chance to be a part of it. Despite a post-industrial, digital bent towards loose commitments, a scheduled event can take precedence, if it has the perceived value a person seeks (like a shared experience or a great photo opportunity).

In your business, you may be able to schedule exciting events that make customers drop all other activities to be part of the fun. Whether these are digital moments or 'pop-ups' in the physical world, the sense of timing tied to scheduled events is what makes it important in the first place.

Action: develop a must attend event for your customers that cannot be recorded or replayed

8. Lost productivity can strengthen teams

A few economists enjoyed predicting how much money businesses would lose during the eclipse hours. The number was of course in the millions. But what were employees doing while they stared out the window, probably chatting with their colleagues, maybe even introducing themselves to people they did not know. Fretting about losing may prompt you to miss out on what you are gaining, a whole new level of camaraderie in your team.

If your business needed a team boost, the eclipse viewing was an inexpensive (hand out glasses for all) way to leverage a global event for your own benefit. The viewing did not last all day, so anything that needed to be done could have happened at some point. But with those few free hours, you had a chance to change the dynamic of your team, possibly forever.

Action: the next time a collective event threatens to distract your employees, use the opportunity to encourage conversation and interaction with colleagues. A stealth team-building event may have a lot more lasting value than playing building games.

9. Science is fun

Accepting the idea of an impending total eclipse of the sun meant you had to believe what the scientists were telling you. Few people have the equipment to measure the rotation of the earth, moon and sun. Most people rise every day expecting the sun to be able to send all its rays to the earth. For the few hours when it cannot, science has your attention.

If you have a business with a science connection, think about the need humans have to embrace science when it affects them directly. A total blackout of the sun hits home with every human and animal (and probably plant) on earth. Your business may not be as dramatic, but if you are selling a product or providing a service that helps people, consider how the science involved may spark additional interest in the value you are seeking to provide.

Action: use science facts to support the value your product or service purports to deliver

10. A reoccurring theme has reoccurring value (welcome back, Bonnie Tyler)

If you are a 80s music fan you probably enjoyed the resurrection of Bonnie Tyler on Eclipse Day. The 80s pop star's hit song "Total Eclipse of the Heart," enjoyed a YouTube surge, and she was all over the news seen still performing the song for the occasion. (The song was written by Jim Steinman). Besides the wonderful pop culture optics the news reports provided, the story was a reminder of how a product tied to a reoccurring theme can enjoy multiple rebirths.

If your business or service is not obviously tied to events or practices, like weddings, birthdays and eclipses, try and figure out if you have a theme. You have the ability to re-launch your product over and over again, if you can tie it to another 'happening' out in the world. The value of an ever-regenerating product cannot be measured. Each new launch brings new publicity, promotional opportunities and revenue.

Action: find the reoccurring nature of your product or service that can be used to re-launch, boost or promote your business again and again.

Remember...

A successful entrepreneur pays attention to how events in the world may affect a business enterprise. If you were one of the millions in the path of the total eclipse of the sun on Monday August 21, 2017, you may have been caught up in the spectacle and missed the business lessons magnified by the event. Hopefully these ten reminders will help you think about where to place your attention the next time a mass collective event takes place.

More Resources for Entrepreneurs

If you would like some help in getting started, click this link to check out [free video training series for wantpreneurs](#). This training is for those of you who have always wanted to start a business but need to find the confidence, time and money to get started.

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